

"THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—CHRIST.

The Christian Freeman.

A MONTHLY UNITARIAN JOURNAL.

DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS, MORAL, AND SOCIAL PROGRESS.

No. 9.—VOL. XIII.]

SEPTEMBER, 1869.

[PRICE 1½d.

THE STORY OF LA ROCHE.

Now many years ago an English philosopher, who had little sympathy with religion, resided at a small town in France. Some disappointments in his native country had first driven him abroad, and he was afterwards induced to remain there, from having found, in this retreat, where the connections even of nation and language were avoided, a perfect seclusion and retirement highly favourable to the development of abstract subjects, in which he excelled.

One morning, while he sat busied in those speculations which afterwards astonished the world, an old female domestic, who served him for a house-keeper, brought him word that an elderly gentleman and his daughter had arrived in the village the preceding evening, on their way to some distant country, and that the father had been suddenly seized in the night with a dangerous disorder, which the people of the inn where they lodged feared would prove mortal; that she had been sent for, as having some knowledge in medicine, the village surgeon being then absent; and that it was truly piteous to see the good old man, who seemed not so much afflicted by his own distress as by that which it caused to his daughter. Her master laid aside the volume in his hand, and broke off the chain of ideas it had inspired. His night-gown was exchanged for a coat, and he followed his housekeeper to the sick man's apartment.

'Twas the best in the little inn where they lay, but a paltry one notwithstanding. On a flock bed, at one end, lay the old man he came to visit; at the foot of it sat his daughter. She was dressed in a clean white bedgown; her dark locks hung loosely over it as she bent forward, watching the languid looks of her father.

"Mademoiselle!" said the old woman, in a soft tone. She turned, and showed one of the finest faces in the world. It was touched, not spoiled, with sorrow; and when she perceived a stranger, whom the old woman now introduced to her, a blush at first, and then the gentle ceremonial of native politeness, which the affliction of the time tempered, but did not extinguish, crossed it for a moment, and changed its expression. 'Twas sweetness all, however, and our philosopher felt it strongly. It was not a time for words; he offered his services in a few sincere ones. "Monsieur lies miserably ill here," said the housekeeper; "if he could possibly be moved any where?" "If he could be moved to our house," said her master. The sick man was wrapt in blankets, and carried across the street to the English gentleman's. The old woman helped his daughter to nurse him there. The surgeon, who arrived soon after, prescribed a little, and nature did much for him; in a week he was able to thank his benefactor.

By that time his host had learned the name and character of his guest. He was a Protestant clergyman of Switzerland, called La Roche, a widower, who had lately buried his wife, after a long and lingering illness, for which travelling had been prescribed, and was now returning home, after an ineffectual and melancholy journey with his only child, the daughter we have mentioned.

He was a devout man, as became his profession. He possessed devotion in all its warmth, but with none of its asperity—I mean that asperity which men, called devout, sometimes indulge in. Our philosopher, though he felt no devotion, never quarrelled with it in others. His housekeeper joined the old man and his daughter in the prayers and thanksgivings which they offered up for his recovery, for

she, too, was a heretic, in the phrase of the village. The philosopher walked out, with his long staff and his dog, and left them to their prayers and thanksgivings. "My master," said the old woman, "alas! he is not a Christian; but he is the best of unbelievers." "Not a Christian!" exclaimed Mademoiselle La Roche, "yet he saved my father! Heaven bless him for't; I would he were a Christian!" "There is a pride in human knowledge, my child," said her father, "which often blinds men to the sublime truths of revelation; hence opposers of Christianity are found among men of virtuous lives, as well as among those of dissipated and licentious characters. Nay, sometimes I have known the latter more easily converted to the true faith than the former, because the fume of passion is more easily dissipated than the mist of false theory and delusive speculation." "Alas! my father, he shall be a Christian before he dies." She was interrupted by the arrival of their landlord. He took her hand with an air of kindness: she drew it away from him in silence, threw down her eyes to the ground, and left the room. "I have been thanking God," said the good La Roche, "for my recovery." "That is right," replied his landlord. "I would not wish," continued the old man, hesitatingly, "to think otherwise; did I not look up with gratitude to that Being, I should barely be satisfied with my recovery, as a continuation of life, which, it may be, is not a real good. Alas! I may live to wish I had died, that you had left me to die, sir, instead of kindly relieving me; but when I look on this renovated being as the gift of the Almighty, I feel a far different sentiment—my heart dilates with gratitude and love to Him: it is prepared for doing his will, not as a duty, but as a pleasure, and regards every breach of it, not with disapprobation, but with horror. "You say right, my dear sir," replied the philosopher, "but you are not yet re-established enough to talk much—you must take care of your health, and neither study nor preach for some time. I have been thinking over a scheme that struck me to-day, when you mentioned your intended departure. I never was in Switzerland: I have a great mind to accompany your daughter and you into

that country. I will help to take care of you by the road; for as I was your first physician, I hold myself responsible for your cure." La Roche's eyes glistened at the proposal; his daughter was called in and told of it. She was equally pleased with her father; for they really loved their landlord—not perhaps the less for his infidelity; at least that circumstance mixed a sort of pity with their regard for him—their souls were not of a mould for harsher feelings; hatred never dwelt in them.

They travelled by short stages; for the philosopher was as good as his word, in taking care that the old man should not be fatigued. La Roche found a degree of simplicity and gentleness in his companion which is not always annexed to the character of a learned or a wise man. His daughter, who was prepared to be afraid of him, was equally undeceived; she found in him nothing of that self-importance which superior parts, or great cultivation of them, is apt to confer.

On his part, he was charmed with the society of the good clergyman and his lovely daughter. He found in them the guileless manner of the earliest times, with the culture and accomplishment of the most refined ones—every better feeling warm and vivid, every ungentle one repressed or overcome. He was not addicted to love, but he felt himself happy in being the friend of Mademoiselle La Roche, and sometimes envied her father the possession of such a child.

After a journey of eleven days they arrived at the dwelling of La Roche. It was situated in one of those valleys of the canton of Berne, where nature seems to repose, as it were, in quiet, and has enclosed her retreat with mountains inaccessible.

They had not been long arrived when a number of La Roche's parishioners who had heard of his return came to the house to see and welcome him. The honest folks were awkward, but sincere, in their professions of regard. They made some attempts at condolence; it was too delicate for their handling; but La Roche took it in good part. "It has pleased God," said he; and they saw he had settled the matter with himself. Philosophy could not have done so much with a thousand words.

It was now evening, and the good peasants were about to depart, when a clock was heard to strike seven, and the hour was followed by a particular chime. The country folks who had come to welcome their pastor turned their looks towards him at the sound ; he explained their meaning to his guest : "that is the signal," said he, "for our evening exercise ; this is one of the nights of the week in which some of my parishioners are wont to join in it ; a little rustic saloon serves for the chapel of our family, and such of the good people as are with us ; if you choose rather to walk out, I will furnish you with an attendant ; or here are a few old books that may afford you some entertainment within." "By no means," answered the philosopher, "I will attend Ma'moiselle at her devotions." "She is our organist," said La Roche ; "our neighbourhood is the country of musical mechanism, and I have a small organ fitted up for the purpose of assisting our singing." "Tis an additional inducement," replied the other ; and they walked into the room together. At the end stood the organ mentioned by La Roche ; before it was a curtain, which his daughter drew aside, and, placing herself on a seat within, and drawing the curtain close, so as to save her the awkwardness of an exhibition, began a voluntary, solemn and beautiful in the highest degree. Our philosopher was no musician, but he was not altogether insensible to music ; this fastened on his mind more strongly from its beauty being unexpected. The solemn prelude introduced a hymn, in which such of the audience as could sing immediately joined ; the words were mostly taken from holy writ ; it spoke the praises of God, and his care of good men. Something was said of the death of the just, of such as die in the Lord. The organ was touched with a hand less firm—it paused, it ceased ; and the sobbing of Ma'moiselle La Roche was heard in its stead. Her father gave a sign for stopping the psalmody, and rose to pray. He was discomposed at first, and his voice faltered as he spoke ; but his heart was in his words, and his warmth overcame his embarrassment. He addressed a Being whom he loved, and he spoke for those he loved. His parishioners caught the ardour of the good old man ; even the philosopher felt himself moved, and forgot,

for a moment, to think why he should not.

La Roche's religion was that of devotion, not theory, and his guest was averse from disputation ; their discourse, therefore, did not lead to questions concerning the belief of either ; yet would the old man sometimes speak of his, from the fulness of a heart impressed with its force, and wishing to spread the pleasure he enjoyed in it. The ideas of his God, and his Saviour, were so congenial to his mind, that every emotion of it naturally awoke them. A philosopher might have called him an enthusiast ; but, if he possessed the fervour of enthusiasts, he was guiltless of their bigotry. "Our father which art in Heaven!" might the good man say—for he felt it—and all mankind were his brethren. "When my daughter and I talk of the exquisite pleasure derived from music, you regret your want of musical powers and musical feelings ; it is a department of soul, you say, which nature has almost denied you, which, from the effects you see it have on others, you are sure must be highly delightful. Why should not the same thing be said of religion ? Trust me, I feel it in the same way, an energy, an inspiration, which I would not lose for all the blessings of sense or enjoyments of the world ; yet, so far from lessening my relish of the pleasures of life, methinks I feel it heighten them all. The thought of receiving it from God adds the blessing of sentiment to that of sensation in every good thing I possess ; and when calamities overtake me—and I have had my share—it confers a dignity on my affliction—so lifts me above the world. Man, I know, is but a worm, yet methinks I am then allied to God!" It would have been inhuman in our philosopher to have clouded, even with a doubt, the sunshine of his belief.

'Twas with regret he left a society in which he found himself so happy ; but he settled with La Roche and his daughter a plan of correspondence ; and they took his promise, that, if ever he came within fifty leagues of their dwelling, he should travel those to visit them.

About three years after our philosopher was on a visit at Geneva ; the promise he made to La Roche and his daughter on his former visit was recalled to his mind, by the view of that range of mountains

on a part of which they had often looked together. While he was hesitating about a visit to La Roche, which he wished to make, but found the effort rather too much for him, he received a letter from the old man, which had been forwarded to him from Paris, where he had then fixed his residence. It informed him of the approaching nuptials of Ma'moiselle La Roche with a young man, a relation of her own, and formerly a pupil of her father's, of the most amiable disposition and respectable character. Attached from their earliest years, they had been separated by his joining one of the subsidiary regiments of the canton, then in the service of a foreign power.

Our philosopher felt himself interested in this event; but he was not, perhaps, altogether so happy in the tidings of Ma'moiselle La Roche's marriage as her father supposed him. Not that he was ever a lover of the lady's, but he thought her one of the most amiable women he had ever seen, and there was something in the idea of her being another's for ever that struck him, he knew not why, like a disappointment. After some little speculation on the matter, however, he could look on it as a thing fitting, if not quite agreeable, and determined on this visit to see his old friend and his daughter happy.

On the last day of his journey different accidents had retarded his progress; he was benighted before he reached the quarter in which La Roche resided. His guide, however, was well acquainted with the road, and he found himself at last in view of the lake, which I have before described, in the neighbourhood of La Roche's dwelling. A light gleamed on the water, that seemed to proceed from the house; it moved slowly along as he proceeded up the side of the lake; and at last he saw it glimmer through the trees, and stop at some distance from the place where he then was. He supposed it some piece of bridal merriment, and pushed on his horse that he might be a spectator of the scene; but he was a good deal shocked on approaching the spot to find it proceed from the torch of a person clothed in the dress of an attendant on a funeral, and accompanied by several others, who, like him, seemed to have been employed in the rites of sepulture.

On making inquiry who was the person

they had been burying, one of them, with an accent more mournful than is common to their profession, answered, "Then you knew not Mademoiselle, sir?—you never beheld a lovelier." "La Roche!" exclaimed he, in reply. "Alas! it was she indeed!" The appearance of surprise and grief which his countenance assumed attracted the notice of the peasant with whom he talked. "I perceive, sir, you were acquainted with Mademoiselle La Roche." "Acquainted with her!—Good God!—when—how—where did she die? Where is her father?" "She died, sir, of heart-break, I believe; the young gentleman to whom she was soon to have been married was killed in a duel by a French officer, his intimate companion, and to whom, before their quarrel, he had often done the greatest favours. Her worthy father bears her death as he had often told us a Christian should; he is even so composed as to be now in his pulpit, ready to deliver a few exhortations to his parishioners, as is the custom with us on such occasions. Follow me, sir, and you shall hear him." He followed the man without answering.

The church was dimly lighted, except near the pulpit where the venerable La Roche was seated. His people were now lifting up their voices in a psalm to that Being whom their pastor had taught them ever to bless and to revere. La Roche sat, his figure bending gently forward, his eyes half closed, lifted up in silent devotion. A lamp placed near him threw its light strong on his head, and marked the shadowy lines of age across the paleness of his brow, thinly covered with grey hairs.

The music ceased; La Roche sat for a moment, and nature wrung a few tears from him. His people were loud in their grief. Our philosopher was not less affected than they. La Roche arose. "Father of mercies!" said he, "forgive these tears; assist thy servant to lift up his soul to thee; to lift to thee the souls of thy people! My friends! it is good so to do; at all seasons it is good: but, in the days of our distress, what a privilege it is! Well saith the sacred book, 'Trust in the Lord; at all times trust in the Lord.' When every other support fails us, when the fountains of worldly comfort are dried up, let us then seek those living

waters which flow from the throne of God. 'Tis only from the belief of the goodness and wisdom of a Supreme Being that our calamities can be borne in that manner which becomes a man.

" You behold the mourner of his only child, the last earthly stay and blessing of his declining years! Such a child, too! It becomes not me to speak of her virtues ; yet it is but gratitude to mention them, because they were exerted towards myself. Not many days ago you saw her young, beautiful, virtuous, and happy ; ye who are parents will judge of my felicity then, ye will judge of my affliction now ; but I look towards him who struck me ; I see the hand of a Father amidst the chastenings of my God. Go, then, mourn not for me ; I have not lost my child : but a little while, and we shall meet again never to be separated. But ye are also my children : would ye that I should not grieve without comfort ? So live as she lived, that, when your death cometh, it may be the death of the righteous, and your latter end like hers."

Such was the exhortation of La Roche ; his audience answered it with their tears. The good old man had dried up his at the altar of the Lord ; his countenance had lost its sadness, and assumed the glow of faith and of hope. His visitor followed him into his house. The inspiration of the pulpit was past ; at sight of him the scenes they had last met in rushed again on his mind ; La Roche threw his arms round his neck and watered it with his tears : the other was equally affected ; they went together in silence into the parlour where the evening service was wont to be performed. The curtains of the organ were open ; La Roche started back at the sight. " Oh! my friend!" said he, and his tears burst forth again. " You see my weakness," said he, "'tis the weakness of humanity ; but my comfort is not therefore lost." " I heard you," said the other, " in the pulpit ; I rejoice that such consolation is yours." " It is, my friend," said he, " and I trust I shall ever hold it fast ; if there are any who doubt our faith, let them think of what importance religion is to calamity, and forbear to weaken its force ; if they cannot restore our happiness, let them not take away the solace of our affliction."

The philosopher's heart was smitten ; and

he said long after that there were moments when the remembrance overcame him even to weakness ; when, amidst all the pleasures of philosophical discovery and the pride of literary fame, he recalled to his mind the venerable figure of good La Roche, and wished that he had never doubted.

THEOLOGICAL INSTRUCTION.

A FEW years ago, when Bishop Colenso published his work upon the Pentateuch, showing that it was not written till several centuries after the time of Moses, it met with considerable blame ; not only from those who thought his opinions wrong, but also from many who entirely agreed with him, but who thought it a pity to unsettle the minds of the ignorant multitude. Such men said he ought to have written it in Latin, to be read only by scholars, and not in English, to be read by the nation at large. One eminent writer in particular said, with respect to the poor and ignorant, that it is our duty to edify them, not to instruct them. And this unfortunately has been, and is, too much the policy of the educated and wealthy.

About the same time a Worcestershire clergyman published a sermon, in which he said he was sometimes asked by members of his congregation to explain a theological difficulty, and to direct them to a proper book in a matter of doubt ; and he added : " Do you think I answered them ? Do you think I tell them what to read ? No, I say, go down on your knees, you sinner, and pray to God to drive all such doubts and thoughts out of your mind." Now nobody will deny that prayer is a very proper thing, but at the same time it could not be wrong for a clergyman to help an inquirer in his difficulties. We should pray with the spirit, but we should pray with the understanding also. The clergyman, it should seem, wished to edify his flock, not to instruct them. He probably thought that if they knew more they might be less docile hearers ; in short, that if they knew more they might like his sermons less.

Now this jealousy in the educated class, or rather in the half-educated class, this fear of raising up the poor and ignorant by the help of learning, is not confined to the clergy. It shows itself unfortunately in the managers of our schools ; and though

the Unitarians have perhaps less of it than the church people, they are not wholly free from it. At the present moment the nation is craving for theological instruction. One half of the population is wholly alienated from all places of public worship. They are asking for dogmatic opinions that shall not be repulsive to good sense; and we Unitarians, instead of supplying the want, only tell them that if they will come to our chapels they shall hear a good moral and religious discourse. Now a good moral and religious discourse is a very good thing; so also is the edification spoken of by the writer mentioned above; so also is the prayer recommended by the Worcestershire clergyman. But it happens not to be the thing asked for. Morality rests upon religion, and religion rests upon theology; and the morality and religion will both be better in proportion as the theology is true. We Unitarians believe that we hold a better theology than our neighbours around us; and it seems our duty particularly to explain it to the class of persons who are outside all the churches. But unfortunately we are too much of kid-glove Christians. Because we are educated we are fastidious, and dislike the attempt to raise the ignorant by the very instruction which we value for ourselves. We are not wanting in benevolence; we make missions to the poor to show kindness to them in many ways; we would teach them to be religious, and teach them to be moral; we would even give them instruction in secular knowledge, provided it does not go beyond reading, writing, and arithmetic. But, unfortunately, it is too much the fashion with us to keep back from them all higher knowledge. The Apostle Paul was a man of learning, and he made use of his learning to preach to the ignorant. The Unitarians should take him for their model. They wish to have a body of learned ministers, but they do not think with the Apostle Paul that their learning would be best employed in giving theology to the uneducated.

HYMN TO THE FLOWERS.

BY HORACE SMITH.

Day-stars! that ope your eyes with morn to twinkle,
From rainbow galaxies of earth's creation,
And dewdrops on her lonely altars sprinkle
As a libation!

Ye matin worshippers! who, bending lowly
Before the uprisen sun—God's lidless eye—
Throw from your chalices a sweet and holy
Incense on high!

Ye bright mosaics! that with storied beauty
The floor of Nature's temple tessellate,
What numerous emblems of instructive duty
Your forms create!

'Neath cloistered boughs, each floral bell that
swingeth
And tolls its perfume on the passing air,
Makes Sabbath in the fields, and ever ringeth
A call to prayer.

Not to the domes where crumbling arch and
column
Attest the feebleness of mortal hand,
But to that fane, most catholic and solemn,
Which God hath planned.

To that cathedral, boundless as our wonder,
Whose quenchless lamps the sun and moon
supply—
Its choir the wind and waves, its organ thunder,
Its dome the sky.

There—as in solitude and shade I wander
Through the green aisles, or stretched upon
the sod,
Awed by the silence, reverently ponder
The ways of God—

Your voiceless lips, O flowers, are living
preachers,
Each cup a pulpit, and each leaf a book,
Supplying to my fancy numerous teachers
From loneliest nook.

Floral apostles! that in dewy splendour
"Weep without woe, and blush without a
crime,"

O may I deeply learn, and ne'er surrender
Your lore sublime!

"Thou wert not, Solomon! in all thy glory,
Arrayed," the lilies cry, "in robes like ours;
How vain your grandeur! Ah, how transitory
Are human flowers!"

In the sweet-scented pictures, Heavenly Artist!
With which thou paintest Nature's wide
spread hall,
What a delightful lesson thou impartest
Of love to all.

Not useless are ye, flowers! though made for
pleasure:
Blooming o'er field and wave, by day and
night,

From every source your sanction bids me
treasure

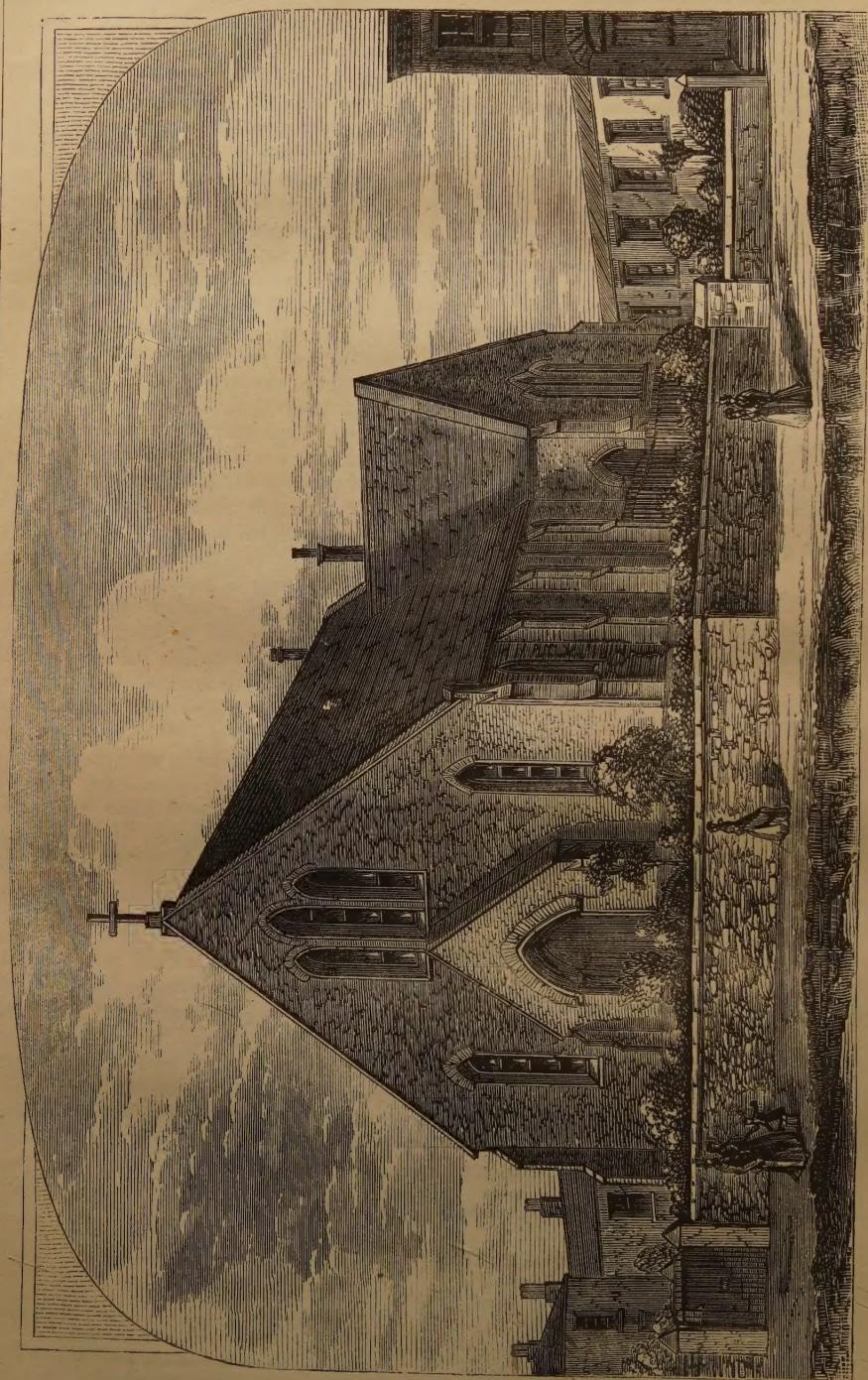
Harmless delight.

Ephemeral sages! What instructors hoary
For such a world of thought could furnish
scope?

Each fading calyx a *memento mori*,
Yet fount of hope.

Posthumous glories! Angel-like collection!
Upraised from seed or bulb interred in earth,
Ye are to me a type of resurrection,
And second birth.

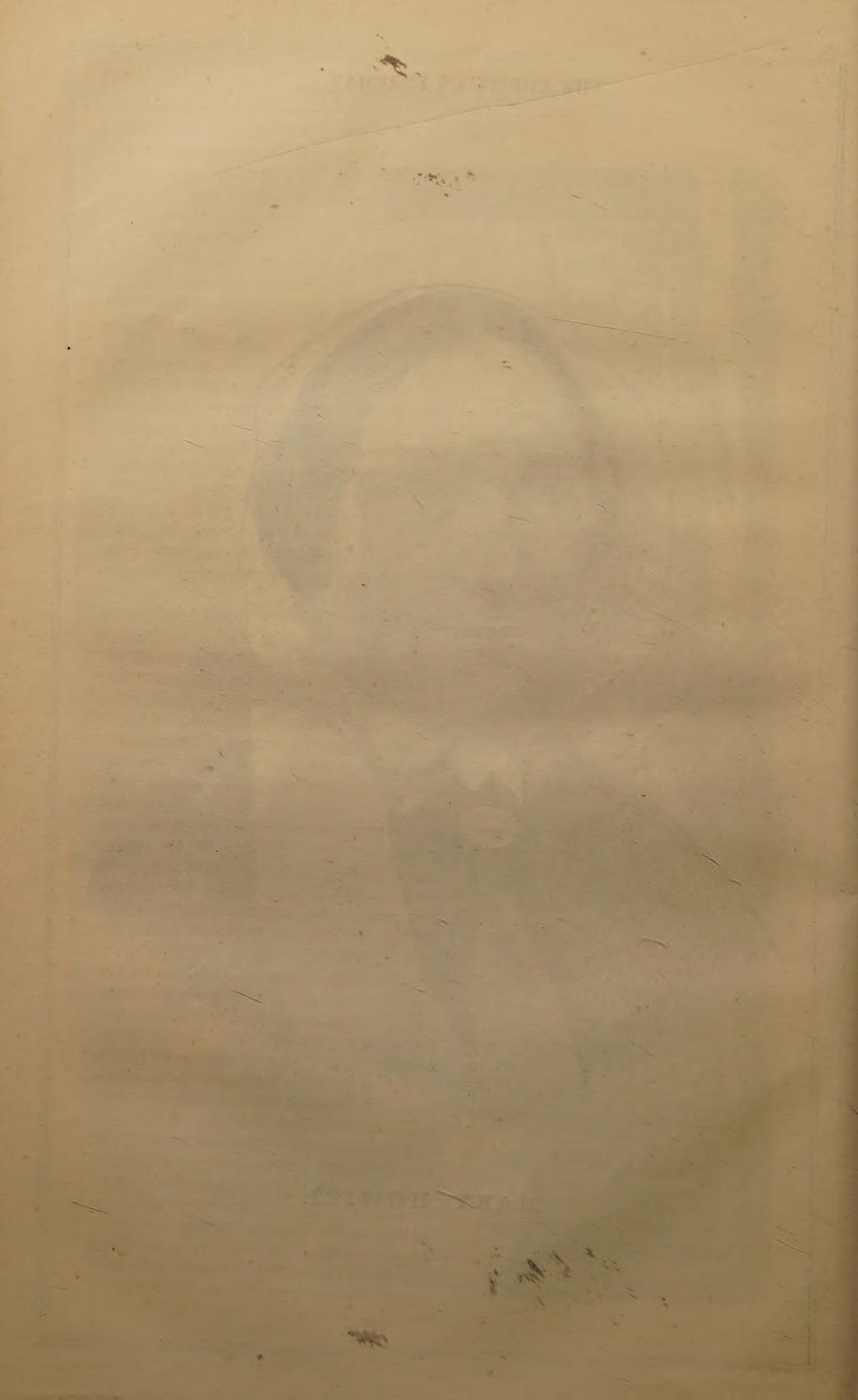
Were I, O God, in churchless lands remaining,
Far from all voice of teachers or divines,
My soul would find in flowers of thy ordaining,
Priests, sermons, shrines!



UNITARIAN CHAPEL, HEYWOOD.



MARY HOWITT.



UNITARIAN CHAPEL, HEYWOOD.

THE congregation worshipping in the above chapel may be regarded as the first fruits of that missionary zeal which sprung up in our denomination a few years ago, and which has given it so large a measure of new life and vigour. The attempt to establish Unitarian worship in the town of Heywood was one of the earliest missionary efforts of our churches in Lancashire, and has been abundantly justified by its marked success. It was in the year 1856 that the friends of our cause in Bury began to think that something might and ought to be done for the establishment of a Unitarian congregation in Heywood, and accordingly arrangements were made for that purpose, a room was taken, and a service was begun. At that time Unitarianism was almost unknown in Heywood. It was on the first Sunday in June of the above year that the Rev. John Wright, of Bury, gave the first lecture on Unitarianism, and another friend from Bury, the Rev. B. Glover, now minister of Crew, worked hard and with much success, in conjunction with Mr. Wright, in this new field of labour. For a time there were very few of the people of Heywood who attended those services, but considerable numbers came over from Bury and Rochdale to encourage the good work, and by and by the nucleus of a congregation was gathered together. When the services had been conducted about twelve months, a larger room was taken, and a Sunday-school was begun. Here the cause was prosperous, both the congregation and school gradually increased, until it became necessary to provide still further accommodation for the wants of the infant church. A new chapel now begun to be talked about, and steps were taken towards its erection. After much anxiety and care an excellent site was secured, and liberal support was given to the building fund by the Unitarians of the district, which was followed up by subscriptions from various parts of the country. Towards the latter end of 1860 the chapel was opened by the Revs. W. H. Channing and R. B. Aspland. After the opening services there still remained a debt of upwards of £300, but this has subsequently been cleared off, so that the chapel is now free from debt. The building is so constructed that it serves

both for a school and chapel; the transepts being partitioned off from the nave form a good schoolroom, capable of accommodating upwards of 150 scholars, while the nave, which forms the chapel, will seat 240. Should the congregation ever so far outgrow its present limits as to need still further accommodation the schoolroom can easily be added to the chapel, which will then be large enough to accommodate from 400 to 500 people. Up to the beginning of 1864 the pulpit was supplied by lay preachers, students, and neighbouring ministers, but at that period the congregation, with the aid of the East Lancashire mission, felt themselves in a position to engage a permanent minister, and the Rev. J. Fox, the present minister, was called to the pulpit. Since then the congregation has continued to grow, and the Sunday-school, numbering about 130 scholars, is one of the most orderly of the district.

MARY HOWITT.

FOR nearly half a century the names of William and Mary Howitt have been as familiar in the mouths of English readers as household words. They have bravely pulled together in their literary career, like true friends, since the year of their marriage, in 1823, when they published their first work of poems, "The Forest Minstrel," and since that time the well-written books they have issued, their titles alone, would fill one of our columns. They both commenced their career as members of the Society of Friends, or Quakers; but since then we believe they have at times shown a preference for our simple Unitarian theology, and now they are among the highest authorities for "Spiritualism." We cannot say of what school their theology is at present. William Howitt is now in his 74th year, and Mary in her 65th. To them we owe a debt of gratitude for valuable translations of Hans Andersen's tales, Miss Bremer's novels, also the "Literature and Romance of Northern Europe." They are the authors of a number of beautiful and touching English ballads, foreign travels, sketches of natural history, English tales, &c. &c. They have certainly contributed their full share of toil to a pure literature, and set the example of a pure and loving life.

REVELATION.

BY JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE, D.D.

REVELATION—what it is, and wherein it is distinguished from Natural Religion; its relation to Intuition, Inspiration, and Demonstration—this is my subject in your series of doctrinal articles.

1. Revelation is God unveiling himself and the spiritual laws of his universe. Natural religion is the work of the human mind thinking about God. Revelation is God coming to man. Natural religion is man feeling after God. In revelation God comes down to visit us. In natural religion we go up to find God.

2. The organ, on the part of man, of both natural and revealed religion, is intuition. This is the eye of the soul, looking in toward spiritual things, as the eye of the body looks out toward visible things.

3. The act of God, by which He reveals himself to the human soul, is inspiration. In moments of inspiration God is speaking to man. In moments of reflection man is examining the results of intuition and inspiration.

4. Every inspired man feels that he is in communion, not with himself or his own thoughts, but with something above himself. He is in a receptive state—not imparting, but receiving. He has fixed the eye of his soul on some divine truth or beauty or good, and, as he muses, the fire burns. As he looks, God sends to him inspiration—the sight of himself. If he is looking for divine truth, the inspiration is of the prophet. If he is looking for divine beauty, the inspiration is of the poet or artist. If for divine goodness, the inspiration is of the saint. To the poet God reveals visions of beauty, to the prophet visions of truth, to the saint visions of goodness.

5. But there are degrees of revelation. To Moses and the prophets the truth revealed was that of law. To Jesus the truth revealed was that of love, including in itself goodness and beauty. This last was the highest, the fulfilment of the other. To Jesus was revealed the identity of love to God and love to man—that is, the identity of true piety and true morality. To Jesus was also revealed that the root of both was the sight of grace, that is, of God's unconditional love to man. Being inspired so as to see these truths, Jesus was thereby made the Christ, or king of human nature. He thus becomes the mediator of

the divine life, and faith in him is the open way to God.

6. In all natural religions there is something revealed; in all revealed religions something natural. The natural side in each is the search of the intellect after God, producing legend, myth, symbol, creed, theology. The inspired side in each is the descent of truth into the soul by inspiration through intuition. In the teaching of Christ this speculative element is reduced to its minimum, and the inspiration is at its maximum. Read the Sermon on the Mount. It is all statement, not ornament. It is description of facts, not speculation about notions. Jesus describes the laws of the spiritual world as a painter would describe a landscape before his eyes. Therefore he taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes. The scribes speculated and reasoned. He saw and told. Therefore he will be, to all time, the king of men, for higher than this nothing can go. Love, including truth and beauty, infinite love, having been seen and shown, the highest step of revelation is taken. Then the hard divorce which parts things natural and divine was overruled. Then the harmony of God in nature and God in the soul became apparent—in Christ, the living synthesis of both. In Christ natural religion, or man feeling after God, was brought into perfect union with revealed religion, God coming down to man. For though struggle in Jesus is about ended when the gospel story begins, there remain the narrative of the temptation and that of the garden, to show that human effort and agony, human thought and will, had prepared the way for that fulness of inspiration which left his soul transparent to the divine ray of pure white light.

7. The difference between intuition and demonstration is this. Intuition is mental perception, or knowledge at first hand. Demonstration is an inference of the unknown from the known, or proof at second-hand. Intuition is an interior or mental sight—the eye within the soul, which looks inward at truth, as the bodily eye looks outward at nature. Without intuition there could be no demonstration, for there could be nothing to reason from. Intuition says, "I see this to be so." Demonstration says "Because this is so, that must also be so."

8. We believe many things which we

cannot prove. We believe in our own existence ; in that of the outward world ; in mathematical axioms ; in the ideas of time, space, cause, substance, right and wrong, freedom, the infinite. All men believe these things. They are facts seen—not propositions demonstrated. We can put them in the form of propositions, and say, "I believe that I exist—that the world exists. I believe the universe to be infinite, and time to be infinite." But we cannot demonstrate the truth of any of these propositions, for they are first principles, and therefore incapable of demonstration.

There is in the human intellect a power which sees, and another power which reasons on what is seen. The seeing power, or intuition, acts spontaneously, and so all men see the great fundamental facts. But the reasoning power acts according to our deliberate efforts, and, therefore, in some men it acts more and in others less.

Moreover, intuition produces necessary belief. No man can help believing in his own existence, in cause and effect, in substance and form, in space and time, in infinite extension, infinite duration, &c. But we have, to some extent, the power of making ourselves believe by reasoning what we choose, and making ourselves disbelieve what we choose.

9. The intuitive beliefs are the most reasonable of all, because they come from reason itself, not from reasoning ; because they are the basis of all other belief ; because they are rooted in the nature of man, and so are providential ; because they are the beliefs of all men, and so are testified to by universal human reason.

10. Is there any intuitive belief in God ? We must define the term God before we can answer this question. And here we must distinguish between the idea of God and the conception of God. All men believe in God—but scarcely two men agree as to the character of God. All men believe in a Being or beings—present, but invisible—that is, beings who are not perceived by the senses, but yet known to exist ; therefore perceived by intuition, or the eye looking inward, or by the supersensual perception. All men believe that this divine Being—or supersensual Being—is infinite—that is, out of limits—not limited in power, wisdom, or goodness, according to their conception of what power, wisdom and goodness, are.

In this sense, therefore, there is an intuitive belief in God, even in the minds of those who endeavour to suppress it.

18. How far does this intuitive belief carry us ? It gives us the essential basis of belief in God. It gives us the idea of God, as the unseen presence, behind all things, below all things, or above all things—making and forming all things in past, present, and future—guiding all events in past, present, and future. He is the I Am of Moses ; the Para-Brahm, or essential spirit, of the Vedas ; the Time without Bonds, Zerane Akerane, of Zoroaster ; the Buddha or Supreme Man of the Buddhists ; the Order of the Universe and Highest Reason of Socrates ; the basis and foundation of all things with Plato ; the "Perfect Being" of Cudworth ; the "First Cause" of Clarke ; the "Absolute Being" of Theodore Parker.

But it will be seen that this Being is still devoid of moral character, of personal attributes. He is an abstract Being—a framework of power, laws, and will, to be filled up, later, by some other process.

12. That the intuitive conception of God is not the same as a knowledge of the true character of God appears from the fact that while the intuitive idea is one and the same everywhere, the conception of the divine character changes with the character of the worshipper. The true character of God is only to be learned from the lives of good men. The character of God is infinite goodness. But how do we know infinite goodness except through finite goodness carried to its perfection ? "He who loveth not his brother which he hath seen, how shall he love God whom he hath not seen ?" In this sense the character of God is revealed through good men's lives. In this sense Jesus was the highest revelation of God, and he could justly say, "He who hath seen me hath seen the Father." The character of God is the perfection of human goodness, for man was made in the image of God. Imperfect human goodness, in ourselves and others, shows us the character of God imperfectly. Perfect human goodness, if such exists or has existed, shows us the character of God perfectly. This is the meaning and value of the incarnation, and of the force there is in the Christian faith, in Jesus Christ, as the perfect man, and so perfect image of God.

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

"The soul can bear to part with all its loves, the soft voice, the kindling smile, the starting tear, and the profoundest sighs of all by whom it is beloved ; but it cannot bear to part with its existence. It cannot even believe the possibility of that which yet it may darkly dread. Its loves, its passions, its joys, its agonies, are *not itself*. They may perish, but it is imperishable. Strip it of all it has seen, touched, enjoyed, or suffered—still it seems to survive ; bury all it knew, or could know in the grave, but itself cannot be trodden down into the corruption. It seems nothing like itself in what perishes, except in dim analogies that vanish before its last profound self-meditation—and though it parts with its mortal weeds at last, as with a garment, its life is felt at last to be something not even in contrast with the death of the body, but to flow on like a flood, that we believe continues still to flow after it has entered into the unseen solitude of some boundless desert.

"If this earth were at once the soul's cradle and her tomb, why should that cradle have been hung amid the stars, and that tomb illuminated by their eternal light ? If, indeed, a child of the clay, was not this earth, with all its plains, forests, mountains, and seas, capacious enough for the dreams of that creature whose course was finally to be extinguished in the darkness of its bosom ? What have we to do with planets, and suns, and spheres, and all the dread magnificence of heaven ? Were we framed merely that we might for a few years rejoice in the beauty of the stars, as in that of the flowers beneath our feet ? And ought we to be grateful for those transitory glimpses of the heavens, as for the fading splendour of the earth ? But the heavens are not an idle show, hung out for the gaze of that idle dreamer, man. They are the work of the Eternal God, and He has given us power therein to read and to understand His glory. It is not our eyes only that are dazzled by the face of heaven—our souls can comprehend the laws by which that face is overspread by its celestial smiles. The dwelling-place of our spirits is already in the heavens. Well, we are entitled to give names unto the stars, for we know the moment of their rising and their setting, and can be with them at

every part of their shining journey through the boundless ether. While generations of men have lived, died, and are buried, the astronomer thinks of the golden orb that shone centuries ago within the vision of man, and lifts up his eye undoubting at the very moment when it again comes glorious on its predicted return. Were the Eternal Being to slacken the course of a planet, or increase even the distance of the fixed stars, the decree would be soon known on earth. Our ignorance is great, because so is our knowledge ; for it is from the mightiness and vastness of what we do know that we imagine the illimitable unknown creation. And to whom has God made these revelations ? To a worm that next moment is to be in darkness ? To a piece of earth momentarily raised into breathing existence ? To a soul perishable as the telescopes through which it looks into the gates of heaven ?

'Oh ! star-eyed science, hast thou wander'd there

To waft us home—the message of despair ?

No ; there is no despair in the gracious light of heaven. As we travel through those orbs we feel indeed that we have no power, but we feel that we have mighty knowledge. We can create nothing, but we can dimly understand all. It belongs only to God to *create*, but it is given to man to *know*—and that knowledge is itself an assurance of immortality."

PROFESSOR WILSON.

STICKING TO THE TRUTH.

SOME time ago, on board an English steamer, a little ragged boy, aged nine years, was discovered on the fourth day of the outward voyage from Liverpool to New York, and carried before the first mate, whose duty it was to deal with such cases. When questioned as to the object of his being stowed away, and who brought him on board, the boy, who had a beautiful sunny face, and eyes that looked like the very mirrors of truth, replied that his step-father did it, because he could not afford to keep him, nor to pay his passage out to Halifax, where he had an aunt who was well off, to whose house he was going. The mate did not believe the story, in spite of the winning face and truthful accents of the boy. He had seen too much of stow-aways to be easily deceived by them, he said; and it

was his firm conviction that the boy had been brought on board and provided with food by the sailors. The little fellow was very roughly handled in consequence. Day by day he was questioned and re-questioned, but always with the same result. He did not know a sailor on board, and his father alone had secreted him and given him the food which he ate. The sailors do unfortunately at times wrong the owners by having "stow-aways," and this made the mate so severe with this little boy.

At last the mate, wearied by the boy's persistence in the same story, and perhaps a little anxious to inculpate the sailors, seized him one day by the collar, and dragging him to the fore, told him, that unless he confessed the truth in ten minutes from that time he would hang him on the yard-arm. He then made him sit down under it on the deck. All around him were the passengers and the sailors of the mid-day watch, and in front of him stood the inexorable mate, with his chronometer in hand, and the other officers of the ship by his side. It was the finest sight, said our informant, that we ever beheld—to see the pale, proud, sorrowful face of that noble boy, his head erect, his eyes bright through the tears that suffused them. When eight minutes had fled the mate told him that he had but two minutes to live, and advised him to speak the truth and save his life; but he replied, with the utmost simplicity and sincerity, by asking the mate if he might pray.

The mate said nothing, but nodded his head and turned as pale as a ghost, and shook with trembling like a reed with the wind. And there, all eyes turned on him, this brave and noble little fellow, this poor waif whom society owned not, and whose step-father could not care for—there he knelt with clasped hands and eyes up-raised to heaven, while he repeated audibly the Lord's Prayer, and prayed God to take him to heaven.

There then occurred a scene as of Pentecost. Sobs broke from strong, hard hearts, as the mate sprang forward to the boy and clasped him to his bosom, and kissed him and blessed him, and told him how sincerely he now believed his story, and how glad he was that he had been brave enough to face death and be willing to sacrifice his life for the truth of his own word.

THE SENTENCE OF AND THE SERMON BY THE JUDGE.

BARON PIGOTT, in delivering the sentence of death on Fanny Oliver for the poisoning of her husband, in the kindness of his heart, addressed her to gain a saving faith in the atoning sacrifice, the blood of Christ, which would wash away all her sins. Now Unitarians everywhere must protest against such language in the mouths of our judges; the claims of truth and the better life of our race demand that we show the absurdity of such counsel, for her sins were *not* washed away, nor had the penalty of her sins been remitted. And our distinguished dispensers of the law must not make the absolution of so fearful a life of crime so easy as the mere confession of belief in the blood of Christ. It misleads the ignorant, who too often think the services of religion and the work of Jesus Christ are to save them from the *penalty* of sin, rather than, as the Bible says, "to save from sin." The poor woman raved on about her faith in Christ while she was flatly lying. Alas! how much do even judges and juries as well as poor sinful culprits in our very midst need instruction on the true teaching of the Christian religion. UNITARIANS, AWAKE!

THE GOOD-NIGHT KISS.

"DEAR mother, when my prayer is said,
Before you take the light,
Oh! lean your head so closely down,
And always kiss good night;
For I am happier in my dreams,
And sleep in sweeter rest,
If I have laid my lips to thine,
And thine to mine are pressed.

"One kiss, dear mother, for the love
My heart keeps warm for thee;
And one for all the tenderness
Thy sweet eyes look to me.
Kiss me forgiveness of my wrongs;
Kiss me with hope and prayer
That I shall be a better child,
And more reward thy care.

"Kiss me for some poor orphan child,
To whom no kiss is given;
And next for all the happy ones,
And then for one in heaven.
Kiss me for everything I love,
The beautiful and bright;
Sweet mother, kiss me for thyself
Once more, and now good night."

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

THE REFORMATION SOCIETY OF NEUCHATEL, in Switzerland, have issued the following programme:—"A church without priests, religion without a catechism, worship without mysteries, morals without theology, and God without creeds."

THE TRUE RELIGION.—The true religion consists in fidelity to one's own sacred convictions, whatever these may be. Any other religion, whether heterodox or orthodox, is as false as is the Father of Lies.

RELIGIOUS TENDENCIES.—In "Religious Tendencies of the Times," lately published, Mr. Grant states that the doctrines of Universalism are spreading in various forms. Some teach the doctrine of annihilation. The Congregationalists, it is said, are, as a body, about to declare the eternity of future punishments to be an open question.

CHRISTIANITY, NATURAL AND UNIVERSAL.—Ralph Waldo Emerson said:—"It is the praise of our New Testament that its teachings go to the honour and benefit of humanity—that no better lesson has been taught or incarnated. Let it stand, beautiful and wholesome, with whatever is most like it in the teaching and practice of men; but do not attempt to elevate it out of humanity by saying 'this was not a man.'

HONOUR WOMEN.—Mr. Beecher says:—Woe be to that man who has lost faith in principle, who has lost faith in men, and, above all, who has lost faith in women! If I see or hear a man that speaks insulting words of women, my heart sighs at the thought that he had a mother whose memory he insults. I feel towards every such man as the Scripture urges us to feel towards the devil himself. Resist him! Flee from him!

A GOOD WIFE.—The value of a woman's sympathy and co-operation is appreciated only by the husband of a good wife. The writer of the preface to the Life of James Audubon, the naturalist, says that "Mrs. Audubon appears to have been in every respect worthy of such a man; willing to sacrifice her personal comfort at any moment for the furtherance of his great schemes; ever ready with kiss and counsel when such were most needed; never failing for a moment in her faith that Audubon was destined to be one of the greatest workers of the earth."

THE WRONG KEY.—The Romans have always been very free in making jokes about their Popes, and they have a story of one Pope who was rather fond of wine, who, when he went to Heaven, with the key in his hand—as all Popes are supposed to be able to lock and unlock the gates of Heaven—found, to his surprise, that he could not get in. The apostle Peter, hearing the noise that he was making in the keyhole, came to hear what was the matter, and seeing the Pope, opened the door to him, and asked him why he did not let himself in. The Pope said the key did not fit the lock, and Peter, on examining it, remarked, "you have brought the wrong key; this is the key of the wine cellar!"

A JEW.—A Jew, a man of understanding, declared that it was wasting water to baptise a Jew, for a Jew will continue a Jew until the tenth generation. And if a Jew were to turn Christian, he would be of the sect of those people who deny the deity of Jesus Christ.

THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.—It may be safely predicted that ere long the doctrine of endless torments will cease to be a "fundamental" among Christian churches. We learn that a controversy on universal restoration has broken out in the Council of the Evangelical Alliance, the Rev. P. R. Birks having taken the ground that the Scriptures warrant the hope that the whole human race may be restored.

ANECDOTE OF EULER, TOLD BY ARAGO IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES OF FRANCE.—Euler was eminently pious. One Sunday afternoon a celebrated preacher of one of the Berlin churches said to him, "Alas! the cause of religious truth is lost—faith no longer exists. Would you believe it," said the preacher, "I pictured creation in all its poetry; in all its marvellous beauty. I cited the philosophers of old; I quoted the Bible itself; half my audience slept, the other had left the church." "Try the following experiment," said Euler:—"Instead of quoting great philosophers to convey an idea of the vastness of creation, tell your audience of the facts science reveals to us. Tell them that the sun is 1,200,000 times greater than our earth. Tell them that the planets are worlds; that Jupiter is 1400 times greater than our earth. Describe the wonders of Saturn's ring. Tell them of the stars, and convey an idea of their distance by the scale of light. Tell them that it traverses 80,000 leagues per second. Tell them that there exists not a star whose light reaches us in less than three years. That from several the light only attains our hemisphere in thirty years, and from positive facts pass on to the great probabilities of scientific discovery. Say, for instance, that certain stars might be visible millions of years after their annihilation, because the light they emit requires several millions of years to reach our earth, &c." Next Sunday the great Euler awaited his friend's arrival with impatience. He came, but depressed and profoundly afflicted. "What has happened?" exclaimed Euler. "Alas," replied his friend, "I am unfortunate. My congregation forgot the respect due to God's holy temple—do you know, they cheered me!"

THE following are the terms for supplying the
CHRISTIAN FREEMAN, post free:

1 copy	...	...	per year	2s. 6d.
2 copies	...	...	"	4 0
5 copies	...	...	"	6 0

Above this number at the same rate.

Communications for the Editor to be addressed to the Rev. R. SPEARS, 56, Grosvenor Park, Camberwell, London, S.E., and all Business Letters to EDWARD T. WHITFIELD, 178, Strand, London.

Printed by SAMUEL TAYLOR, Graystone-place, Fetter-lane, London, and Published by EDWARD T. WHITFIELD, 178, Strand.